



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yellowstone National Park

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# Yellowstone National Park News Release

## CLEANER, QUIETER SNOWMOBILES APPROVED FOR USE IN YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK THIS WINTER

Yellowstone National Park Superintendent Suzanne Lewis announced today that several models of snowmobiles produced by two major manufacturers have been certified as meeting the new, stringent noise and pollution requirements being phased in this winter in Yellowstone National Park.

Both Arctic Cat and Polaris are beginning full-scale production of machines with 4-stroke engines that are significantly cleaner and quieter than traditional snowmobiles with 2-stroke engines. Other 4-stroke machines produced by both makers in 2002 and 2003 have also been certified as meeting the "Best Available Technology" requirements the park established earlier this year. (*See attached list*)

When compared to current 2-stroke powered snowmobiles, the approved 4-stroke machines:

- Reduce hydrocarbon emissions by at least 90%
- Reduce carbon monoxide emissions by at least 70%
- Reduce the sound level at full throttle to no more than 73 decibels

This winter, 80 percent of all snowmobiles entering the park must be part of commercially guided trips. All of the machines used on these guided trips must meet these new requirements. By the winter of 2004-2005, all snowmobiles entering Yellowstone must meet these strict noise and pollution requirements. "While the new four-stroke machines that the National Park Service has certified for use in Yellowstone this year meet the technology standards spelled out in the 2003 Winter Use Plan, we continue to encourage industry to produce snowmobiles that perform even more quietly and with still-greater emission reductions," Superintendent Lewis stated.

There are daily limits on the number of snowmobiles allowed in the park. Advance snowmobile reservations are required. Commercial guides take care of reservations for their customers; individuals can make reservations by calling Xanterra Parks and Resorts between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Mountain Time at (307) 344-7311.

Snowmobiles in Yellowstone National Park are restricted to traveling on roads and parking lots specifically groomed for their use. Off-road travel and side hilling is prohibited. Wild animals have the right-of way. All over-snow travel is prohibited between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. All operators must have a valid driver's license. All regulations including posted speed limits are aggressively enforced. More information, including the park's 2003-2004 *Winter Trip Planner* are available online at [www.nps.gov/yell/planvisit/winteruse/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yell/planvisit/winteruse/index.htm) or by calling the park at (307) 344-7381.

Most interior park roads close to automobile traffic in early November and typically reopen to over-snow travel only in mid-December, weather and snow conditions permitting. With the onset of spring, the park's winter season usually ends in early March. Plowing operations allow interior park roads to reopen to automobile travel in April or May. The road from the park's North Entrance at Gardiner, Montana, to the Northeast Entrance at Cooke City, Montana, is open all year to automobile traffic.

The park's new Winter Use Plan being phased-in starting this year is the result of a decade of comments, research and lawsuits. The plan's goals include providing a cleaner, quieter, and safer winter experience for visitors, employees and wildlife. A proposed rule outlining the implementation of the Winter Use Plan is out for public review and comment until October 14, 2003. After the public comments are reviewed, any necessary changes will be incorporated and a final rule will be published before the start of this winter season. Details are available on the park web site at [www.nps.gov/yell/rule](http://www.nps.gov/yell/rule).

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**Snowmobiles Meeting Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks'  
Best Available Technology (BAT) Requirements**

Snowmobile	Average Air Emissions (g/kW-hr)		Sound Emissions (dBA)
	Hydrocarbons	Carbon Monoxide	
<b>Average 2-Stroke Snowmobile (Non-BAT)</b>	150	400	No greater than 78*
<b>BAT Requirements</b>	Less than 15	Less than 120	73 or less
2002 Arctic Cat 4-Stroke Touring	6.20	79.95	71.3
2002 Arctic Cat 4-Stroke Trail	6.20	79.95	72.0
2002 Polaris Frontier Touring	3.19	79.15	74.6
2003 Arctic Cat 4-Stroke Touring	7.55	95.40	70.1
2003 Arctic Cat 4-Stroke Trail	7.55	95.40	72.2
2003 Polaris Frontier Classic, with PARC Kit	5.4	111.6	73.7
2003 Polaris Frontier Touring, with PARC Kit	5.4	111.6	73.9
2004 Arctic Cat T660 Touring	5.62	92.30	71.75
2004 Polaris Frontier Classic, with PARC Kit	5.4	111.6	73.7
2004 Polaris Frontier Touring, with PARC Kit	5.4	111.6	73.9

\* Society of Automotive Engineers testing procedures allow for a 2 dB tolerance over the sound level limit to provide for variations in test site, temperature gradients, wind velocity gradients, test equipment, and inherent differences in nominally identical vehicles. (It has been observed that under some test site conditions, variability in test results greater than 2 dB can be experienced.)

**Notes**

- Emission figures presented are Official Test Results, which constitute an average of actual engine emissions.
- The 2002 Arctic Cat Trail and Touring models use the same engine and likewise have the same emissions. This is also the case with the 2003 Trail and Touring models.
- The Polaris 2003 and 2004 machines have identical emissions and sound results because only minor calibration changes were made between the model years, which would not affect emissions or sound.
- The 2003 and 2004 Polaris Frontier snowmobiles must be equipped with the Polaris Acoustic Resonance Control (PARC) kit in order to meet BAT noise requirements. The PARC Kit lowers sound levels by controlling the maximum throttle body opening.

Sources of data: 2002 data comes from tests conducted by Southwest Research Institute (air emissions) and Harris, Miller, Miller & Hanson, Inc. (noise emissions). 2003 and 2004 data was provided by Arctic Cat, Inc. and Polaris Industries, Inc. Average 2-stroke snowmobile emissions data comes from EPA's November 8, 2002, snowmobile rule.

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